	THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF LAMBTON			
	Department:	Homelessness Prevention and Children's Services		
	Topic:	<i>Operations' Policy & Procedure</i>	Section A11	Policy # 223
	Subject:	Homelessness Coordinated Access System, Intake Policy		
	Effective Date:	November 17, 2022	<i>Approved By:</i> Ian Hanney	
	Revision Date:	N/A		

- *Disclaimer: If there is a discrepancy between this electronic policy and the written copy held by the policy owner, the written copy prevails.*

Table of Contents

1	SUBJECT	2
2	PURPOSE	2
3	POLICY STATEMENT	2
4	SCOPE	2
5	DEFINITIONS	3
	5.1 Access Point	3
	5.2 By-Name List (BNL)	3
	5.3 Client	3
	5.4 Client Information	3
	5.5 Coordinated Intake	3
	5.6 Employee	3
	5.7 HIFIS	3
	5.8 HIFIS Intake Documentation	3
	5.9 HMIS	3
	5.10 Homelessness	4
	5.11 Homelessness Service Provider	4
	5.12 Housing First	4
6	BACKGROUND	4
7	RESPONSIBILITIES	4
	7.1 Community Entity (CE) - County of Lambton	4
	7.2 Homelessness Service Provider	5
	7.3 Homelessness Front-Line Staff / User	5
	7.4 Homelessness System Coordinator – County of Lambton	5
	7.5 Staff as Assigned - County of Lambton	5

8	PROCEDURE.....	5
	8.1 Access Points and Process	5
	8.1.1 24-Hour Community Access Points	6
	8.2 Client Choice	6
	8.3 Client Intake Form	6
	8.4 Intake Documentation	6
	8.5 Timeframe	7
9	DOCUMENTATION	7
10	EVALUATION	7
11	ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS	7
12	POLICY HISTORY	7
	Appendix A - Community Access Points (CAP) - Identified	8
	Appendix B - Fillable Intake Form	9
	Appendix C - Diversion Questionnaire	10

1 SUBJECT

Homelessness Coordinated Access System, **Intake Policy**, in the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS).

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and clearly define the intake process by which people have fair, equal, and effective access to homelessness assistance in Lambton County.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

The County of Lambton is committed to preventing and ending Homelessness using the principles of “Housing First”. As part of this commitment, the Intake Policy is a critical component of maintaining Lambton County’s real-time By-Name List (LCBNL) and a robust Coordinated Access System for households experiencing homelessness or at immediate risk of homelessness.

The standardized intake assessment/data collection tools described in this policy are part of a best practice to assess the current situation of the household, including level of acuity, and deliver diversion/prevention/resource options.

The Intake policy clearly identifies the community access points and explains the process for entering a homeless client experiencing homelessness or those at risk of experiencing homeless into the Coordinated Access System when presenting at a community access point.

4 SCOPE

The outlined procedures will be followed by agencies within the Lambton County Homelessness System of Care (LCHSC) on a regular basis. This applies to all clients accessing services within the LCHSC.

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 Access Point

The engagement point for the individual or family experiencing a housing crisis. This may include emergency shelters, mobile outreach teams, day centres, other community-based organizations and hotlines. See, [Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives - Canada.ca](#)

5.2 By-Name List (BNL)

A BNL is a real-time, person-specific list of all people known to be experiencing homelessness in our community. Each household has provided consent to be on Lambton County's BNL.

5.3 Client

A client is a consumer of a service provider's resources; this excludes HIFIS users and staff members.

5.4 Client Information

Client Information includes, but is not limited to, a client's name, gender, age, address, marital status, family status, family size, financial information, educational history, contact information, nationality, citizenship, income source, housing history, , details and factors affecting services.

5.5 Coordinated Intake

Coordinated Intake is a standardized approach to assessing a person's current situation, the acuity of their needs and the services they currently receive and may require in the future, and takes into account the background factors that contribute to risk and resilience, changes in acuity, and the role friends, family, caregivers, community, and environmental factors play on a person's development and ability to move forward with their life. See, [Coordinated Intake | The Homeless Hub](#)

5.6 Employee

An "employee" is defined in this policy as someone who is working for or affiliated with the County of Lambton, Homelessness Prevention and Children's Services Department. All employees shall comply with this policy and all applicable privacy legislation as it relates to their particular employment responsibilities.

5.7 HIFIS

The Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) is a comprehensive data collection and case management system designed to better understand what is happening in our community and to work collaboratively. *Note: It is a type of Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS).* See, <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/hifis.html>

5.8 HIFIS Intake Documentation

Intake Documentation includes, but is not limited to, HIFIS Consent Form, Client Intake Form, and Diversion Questionnaire. As a reference tool, an Intake Checklist is also available for use.

5.9 HMIS

The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals, families, and persons at risk of homelessness.

5.10 Homelessness

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. See, [Canadian Definition Of Homelessness](#)

5.11 Homelessness Service Provider

Organizations in the Lambton County Homelessness System of Care that have staff who directly interact with clients to help them address their housing challenges.

5.12 Housing First

Housing First involves moving people experiencing homelessness - particularly people experiencing chronic homelessness - rapidly from the street or emergency shelters into stable and long-term housing, with supports. Stable housing provides a platform to deliver services to address issues frequently faced among the chronically and episodically homeless. The goal is to encourage housing stability and improved quality of life for persons served by Housing First and, to the extent possible, foster self-sufficiency.

See, <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/resources/housing-first.html>

6 BACKGROUND

To prevent and end homelessness, Lambton County must know the current scope of challenges and potential gaps in service to resolve. Quality-driven, reliable data enables goal setting with corresponding action since outputs, outcomes, and impacts can be measured using data points.

HIFIS is a comprehensive data collection and case management system designed to better understand what is happening in our community and to enhance collaboration between service providers. In Lambton County, HIFIS is used by agencies within the LCHSC.

The LCHSC is composed of various community organizations who provide services to persons who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness. The LCHSC includes agencies such as the County of Lambton, emergency shelter providers, transitional housing providers, and street outreach providers.

A Unique Identifier List (also known as a By-Name List or BNL) is a real-time list of all known people experiencing homelessness in our community. It includes a robust set of data points that support coordinated access and prioritization at a household level and an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level. <https://bfzcanada.ca/by-name-lists/>

7 RESPONSIBILITIES

All Employees and Homelessness Service Providers are responsible to comply with this policy and all applicable policies, laws, and regulations regarding the Homelessness Coordinated Access System.

7.1 Community Entity (CE) - County of Lambton

The Community Entity (County of Lambton) is required to document and make available a policy for standardized intake across the Coordinated Access System. It is the responsibility of the CE to support agencies with the appropriate understanding of how to process a common intake in alignment with the implementation of HIFIS and Coordinated Access.

7.2 Homelessness Service Provider

The Homelessness Service Provider is accountable to ensure every client that seeks homelessness services is provided with the initial intake supports required to connect them with the appropriate resources.

7.3 Homelessness Front-Line Staff / User

- Complete Intake Documentation with clients at defined frequencies.
- Create accurate and complete client profiles in HIFIS using information collected on the Intake Documentation.
- Update client information and service-related information in HIFIS on a regular and ongoing basis.

7.4 Homelessness System Coordinator – County of Lambton

- Create accurate and complete client profiles in HIFIS using information collected on the Intake Documentation from HIFIS and non-HIFIS Service Providers with clients providing consent, as required.
- Update client information and service-related information in HIFIS for both HIFIS and non-HIFIS Service Providers with clients providing consent, as required.
- Monitor the accuracy and completeness of client and service-related information.
- Notify relevant staff or agencies if any information is inaccurate and/or incomplete.
- Extract data quality reports from HIFIS on a regular basis for distribution to Management or Staff as assigned.

7.5 Staff as Assigned - County of Lambton

- Monitor the accuracy and completeness of client and service-related information.
- Notify relevant staff or agencies if any information is inaccurate and/or incomplete.
- Extract data quality reports from HIFIS on a regular basis for distribution to Management or Staff as assigned.

8 PROCEDURE

8.1 Access Points and Process

Access points into Lambton County's Coordinated Access System include:

- County of Lambton's Social Services Division
- Housing Service Providers
- Emergency Shelters
- Outreach

➤ *Refer to Appendix A for a list of current Community Access Points.*

Community Access Points (CAPs) are identified agency locations in Lambton County who have regular contact with those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Community Access Points ensure that anyone experiencing homelessness in Lambton County has equitable access to available housing and supports that are appropriate to their needs.

When an individual or family presents as homeless in the community, they will be directed to an identified CAP to begin the process of intake, assessment, and referral to appropriate supports. Agency staff at CAPs will be trained to help individuals and families be diverted from homelessness wherever possible. The CAP will:

- Gain consent to collect information in HIFIS,
- Complete the common Intake documentation,
- Complete an assessment to determine their unique needs, and
- Identify barriers to finding and keeping housing.

Should a household present as homeless at an agency who is not identified as an access point, the client will be referred to the closest, most appropriate CAP for assessment. This connection can be made by assisting the individual or family in locating a more appropriate agency, booking an appointment, or making travel arrangements.

Anytime a client returns to a homeless service provider, the program will confirm their status in HIFIS and re-activate the client with their consent.

8.1.1 24-Hour Community Access Points

For Intake purposes, the 24-hour process is a critical component to effectively connect with Lambton County's homeless population. It ensures households are receiving the necessary supports including being added to the By-Name list (BNL) and Coordinated Access (CA).

Both "The Lodge" (Adults) and "The Haven" (Youth) shelters are available to individuals in Lambton County on a 24-hour basis. Due to their hours of availability, these Homelessness Service Providers will be the designated 24-hour Community Access Points.

8.2 Client Choice

Homelessness staff will offer all available services based on the client's eligibility. Withdrawing or limiting consent does not make a client ineligible for services and supports. Clients are encouraged to exercise choice about what services and housing they believe will be best suited to meet their needs, and their self-determination will be honoured.

8.3 Client Intake Form

All CAPs are required to use the standardized Intake Form for clients. (*Refer to Appendix B - Intake Form.*)

The Intake Form collects basic demographic and housing information needed to serve and refer clients in accordance with best practices and funding obligations. This tool is intended to initiate case management with the client and to highlight areas where a client may require supports related to securing permanent housing. Individual organizations may collect additional information upon intake or throughout service provision.

8.4 Intake Documentation

All HIFIS Front-Line Staff / Users will ensure that the Intake Documentation is completed with every client at the following frequencies:

- a) HIFIS Consent Form must be reviewed and signed (if applicable) when a client seeks services from a Homelessness Service Provider within the LCHSC for the first time; and reviewed every two (2) years.
- b) Client Intake Form must be completed and reviewed with the client when they are initially seeking to obtain services from an agency within the LCHSC.

- c) Diversion Questionnaire must be completed with the client upon the client expressing housing precarity and crisis services, such as emergency housing being sought. (Refer to Appendix C - Diversion Questionnaire.)

8.5 Timeframe

Daily

- All community organizations within the LCHSC will ensure that client updates in HIFIS are completed daily, within 24 hours of changes. (e.g., an Intake)
- Any updates (e.g., Intake changes) should be entered daily and directly in HIFIS via the Client Information and Client Management menus.

Monthly

- The Homelessness System Coordinator (HSC), Social Planners, and Program/Data Analysts verify client information and service provider information monthly.

As Needed

- The HSC, Social Planners, and Program/Data Analysts share the relevant priority lists that qualify for individual programs with Leadership, assigned Case Management teams, and respective Service Providers on an as needed basis.
- The HSC, Social Planners, Program/Data Analysts and BNL Leadership connect with HIFIS Front-Line Staff / Users / Service Providers on an as needed basis.

9 DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is confidential and all records shall be maintained by the Service Providers and County of Lambton staff.

10 EVALUATION

As part of Quality Improvement, the Homelessness Prevention and Children's Services Department may conduct regular reviews of the Intake process to focus on key indicators and potential gaps in service.

11 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- a) A11.221 Coordinated Access – Inactivity Policy
- b) A11.222 Coordinated Access – Timely and Accurate Data in HIFIS
- c) Lambton County's - Homelessness Services Coordinated Access System - Process Guide
- d) County of Lambton Housing and Homelessness Plan, 2020-2024
- e) Lambton County's Quality By-Name List (BNL)

12 POLICY HISTORY

<i>Revised By</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Prepared By</i>
• Policy created.	• November 17, 2022	• Nancy Kalbfleisch


Appendix A - Community Access Points (CAP) - Identified

Any agency in Lambton County can add an individual or family to the By-Name List by completing the Intake process.

Should a household present as homeless at an agency who is not identified as a Community Access Point, the agency will make a connection to one of the following Lambton County's Community Access Points for Intake:

Community Access Points in Lambton County
❖ Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
❖ The Corporation of the County of Lambton - Social Services Division
❖ The Inn of the Good Shepherd <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Lodge (Adult Shelter)○ The Haven (Youth Shelter)
❖ North Lambton Community Health Centre
❖ Sarnia-Lambton Rebound
❖ Sarnia-Lambton Native Friendship Centre
❖ Women's Interval Home
❖ <i>Temporary Congregate Care Sites</i>

Appendix B - Fillable Intake Form



Lambton County's By-Name List (BNL) Intake Form

Instructions

- 1) Open this Common Intake Form on your device and complete
- 2) Click Submit Form
- 3) Complete the Common Consent Form and send to hifs@county-lambton.on.ca

Note: Questions that are mandatory are shown as ★ in this form.


Service Provider Info.

a) ★ Service Provider Name	
b) ★ Staff Member Name	
c) ★ Staff Member Email	
d) ★ Date of Intake	

About You

1) What brings you in today? <small>(Please note the reason for services.)</small>	
2) Were you referred here to me by another organization? If yes, please provide the service provider's name	
3) ★ Have you signed the Common Consent Form that allows different service providers to share information to help solve your housing issue?	Yes No, please complete the Common Consent Form
4) ★ Last Name	
5) ★ First Name	
6) Preferred Name	


v. July 2022 Page 1 of 4



Lambton County's By-Name List (BNL) Intake Form

7) ★ Date of Birth, or Approximate Age if not known	
8) ★ What is your gender identity? Female Transgender M/F Male Transgender F/M Non-Binary Gender Queer Two Spirit Prefer not to say	
9) ★ Are you a Veteran? Veteran – Canadian Armed Forces Former RCMP Veteran – Civilian Undeclared / Refused Veteran – Allies Not a Veteran	
10) ★ How do you self-identify your citizenship or immigration status? Canadian Citizen - Born in Canada Canadian Citizen - Born outside of Canada Permanent Resident/Immigrant Refugee Refugee Claimant Student Visa Visitor Visa Work Visa Undeclared	
11) ★ Do you identify as being part of an Indigenous community? First Nations: On-Reserve First Nations: Off-Reserve Inuit Métis Non-Status Non-Indigenous Unknown	
12) If Indigenous Status • What Province/Territory? • What Band?	Prov/Terr: Band:
13) ★ What is your contact information?	Phone: Email:

v. July 2022 Page 2 of 4




Lambton County's By-Name List (BNL) Intake Form

14) ★ What language do you prefer to use with service providers? English French Other, please specify I need an interpreter	
15) ★ Would you like to learn more? We have a dedicated housing support worker that offers specialized LGBTQ2S+ supports. This worker is sensitive to the specific barriers experienced by people on the LGBTQ2S+ spectrum. They provide affirming support in obtaining and maintaining housing as well as referrals to services that are committed to providing supportive and affirming services.	Yes No

Income

16) ★ Income Type Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Chkd Tax Credit Employment Full time Part-time Employment Benefits/Insurance (EI) Ontario Disability Service Program (ODSP) Ontario Works (OW) – Provincial Social Assistance Self-Employment No Income Other(s), please specify	
---	--

v. July 2022 Page 3 of 4



Lambton County's By-Name List (BNL) Intake Form

17) ★ Where did you sleep last night? • Address	
18) ★ How long have you been staying there? • Move-In Date	
19) ★ Where do you live/ where are you staying? • Temporary Place (limited time of stay) • Permanent Place (as long as you want to stay) • No Fixed Address	

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR SHARING YOUR INFORMATION WITH US!

Next Steps:

- ★ Please click on the below [Submit Form](#) to email this Intake Form.

Reminder: Please also attach or email the completed Common Consent Form to... hifs@county-lambton.on.ca

For Internal Use Only: HIFIS File Number:

v. July 2022 Page 4 of 4

Appendix C - Diversion Questionnaire

11/9/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

Diversion Assessment for Tracking

The purpose of this Tracking Sheet is to provide a consistent intake process into the Lambton County homelessness system. For all individuals experiencing homelessness, or at imminent risk of homelessness, the first point of contact will include diversion strategies. This will provide the individual(s) experiencing homelessness a path into facilities that are a more appropriate option than shelter, to connect with appropriate referrals to support services and to divert the individual, if possible.

***Required**

1. Point of Contact *

Mark only one oval.

In person
 Over the phone

2. Staff Team *

Mark only one oval.

Lodge
 Haven
 County of Lambton
 CMHA
 SLNFC
 Other: _____

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQimWHEOHWMu.pU648bH3qBETGovL2vg0B/edit 1/7

11/9/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

3. All information on this form is confidential; it will only be shared with partnership agencies providing services to you. Is this okay with you? *

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

4. Are you currently safe?

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No
 Declined to answer

5. Are you fleeing abuse?

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No
 Declined to answer

6. Do you need emergency assistance right now? (police, ambulance, fire)

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQimWHEOHWMu.pU648bH3qBETGovL2vg0B/edit 2/7

11/9/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

Script: We have started a new way to help people find alternative housing solutions and to avoid staying in the emergency shelter. My goal is to learn more about your current housing situation and find you a safe place to stay for the next few days until you can connect with a Homelessness Support Worker. That might mean staying in emergency shelter tonight, but we want to avoid that if at all possible. We will work together to find more stable suitable housing if we can. I need to ask you a few questions, and it will take no more than 10 minutes.

Diversion Assessment

7. Client Last Name *

8. Client First Name *

9. Date of Birth *

Example: 7 January 2019

10. Client Contact Information (phone if available)

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQimWHEOHWMu.pU648bH3qBETGovL2vg0B/edit 3/7

11/9/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

11. Income Source *

Mark only one oval.

OW
 ODSP
 CPP/OAS
 Employed
 No Income
 Other: _____

12. Primary reason that you are experiencing homelessness/lost your housing? *

Mark only one oval.

Could not pay rent
 Substance abuse/addictions
 Unemployment/Job loss
 Relationship breakdown
 Could not find housing
 Family/Personal illness
 Eviction for non-financial reasons
 Landlord issues
 Other
 Other: _____

13. Are you able to stay in your current living situation for the next 24- 48hrs?

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No
 Maybe

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQimWHEOHWMu.pU648bH3qBETGovL2vg0B/edit 4/7

Appendix C - Diversion Questionnaire - (Continued)

11/8/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

14. If no, what barriers are preventing you from staying in your current housing situation, even for the short term, while other options can be explored? Or what other supports would you need to remain in your current living situation for the next 24-48hrs? (check all that apply)

Tick all that apply.

Family counseling/supports
 Mental health supports
 Addiction counseling/supports
 Landlord mediation
 Conflict resolution with potential roommate
 Other: _____

15. What financial barriers are preventing you from staying in your current housing situation, even for the short term? Please identify type of assistance (rental, utility, other) and the amount:

16. Would there be anyone you could possibly stay with for a few days if I was able to assist you in connecting with limited financial supports?

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQImWHEOnWMMuJpU648tshUqf8TGovL2ygDB/edit 5/7

11/8/22, 1:47 PM Diversion Assessment for Tracking

17. Is there anywhere you know of that you can move to in the next 24-48 hrs? (an available apartment, roommates looking for someone, family members?)

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

18. What other options do you have – family, friends or coworkers, again even if just for a few days? Explore – what would it take for you to stay there – consider possible ways to remove barriers

Note to service provider: at this time, please evaluate the diversion assessment and identify any diversion strategies. Once a place has been secured, assist the individual in making arrangements to get to the secured accommodations. If no diversion strategies are available, please identify the most appropriate emergency accommodations for the individual to stay until they can be connected with a Homelessness Support Worker. Once accommodations have been secured (either shelter or diversion) inform the individual that a Homelessness Support Worker will contact them the following business day to discuss further options. *

Diversion Outcome

19. Was diversion successful?

Mark only one oval.

Yes
 No

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1YgWQImWHEOnWMMuJpU648tshUqf8TGovL2ygDB/edit 6/7